Technology in public sector units

*170. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have come to the conclusion that much of the losses in public sector undertakings are due to outdated technology; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken by Government for technology upgradation in various public sector units?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) and (b) Reasons for losses in public sector undertakings are many and vary from units to unit depending on the nature of their activities and the market conditions. In the cases of some units, especially in the case of sick units, outdated technology could be one of the reasons for losses.

The Government have taken a number of steps for technology upgradation in public undertakings. High Level Standing Scientific Research Committees/Scientific Advisory Groups have been set up by the various administrative Ministries. One of the major functions of these Committees/Groups is to develop and improve processes and products, create and provide technology support and services and to develop R&D cadre. The development programmes are pursued in close interaction with various agencies like Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and is various National laboratories, academic institutions like Indian Institutes of Technology, Indian Institute of Science and other National agencies. R&D projects in thrust areas are also formulated by technical groups drawn from public sector undertakings, National laboratories and educational institutions. Also, where necessary proposals from these units for import of technology are also favourably considered.

New Energy Policy

*171. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to adopt a new energy policy in view of the contemplated growing demand for energy in the country during the coming years; and

(b) if so, by when the new energy policy is likely to be adopted and what are the salient features of the contemplated policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI): (a) and (b) The objectives of the energy policy of Government include the achievement of self-sufficiency in energy supplies keeping in view the increase in demand. The Planning Commission has initiated a detailed study on long-term energy modelling and Government will take a view in the matters after the result of the Planning Commission's study is available.

Oil exploration in North Eastern Region

*172. SHRI M. T. BABY:
SHRI K. MOHANAN:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that north east region is rich in oil and gas which has not been fully explored so far;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are contemplated to be taken in this regard?